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### Abstract

The posters for *Gunga Din* promised much: 'Thrills for a thousand movies, plundered for one mighty show'. That show was a valentine to the British Raj, in which three sergeants (engagingly played by Cary Grant, Victor McLaglen, and Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.) defeat marauding hordes of 'natives' with the aid of their 'Uncle Tom' water bearer, Gunga Din (Sam Jaffe)[Plate VII]. Audiences loved it. Its racism notwithstanding, even an astute viewer like Bertolt Brecht confessed: 'My heart was touched ... f felt like applauding and laughed in all the right places'.<sup>1</sup> Outwardly the film had little to do with the United States. Most of the cast were British-born and its screenplay claimed to be 'from the poem by Rudyard Kipling'.<sup>2</sup> Yet the film was neither British or faithful to Kipling, but solidly American: directed by George Stevens for RKO, with a screenplay by Oxford-educated Joel Sayre and Stevens's regular collaborator Fred Guiol.<sup>3</sup>

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That Americans could produce such a film raised few eyebrows at the time. *Gunga Din* stood at the end of a long-standing American interest in Kipling and the British Empire including numerous films with Imperial themes. However, the gap between what Kipling wrote and American readings of his work – exemplified in *Gunga Din* – is highly significant. It reveals much about that country's psychological needs as it struggled to define its role in the world during the first half of the twentieth century. Similarly, the later career of *Gunga Din* and the wider Empire film genre offers a commentary on the United States' own experience of Empire and its price.

### *Kipling in America*

Kipling fascinated all levels of American society.<sup>5</sup> President Theodore Roosevelt maintained a long correspondence with him, and nicknamed his second son Kermit Roosevelt 'Kim' as a result.<sup>6</sup> The doomed American explorer Leonidas Hubbard, quoted great chunks of Kipling



*Plate VII: In Hollywood's version of Kipling's India, the three inseparable Sergeants – Cutter, Ballantine and MacChesney (Cary Grant, Victor McLaglen and Douglas Fairbanks Jr.) – cheerfully defend the Raj with the aid of 'native' troops. Their loyal water-bearer Gunga Din (Sam Jaffe) looks on, positioned (in keeping with the film's implicit racial hierarchy) to the right of Cutter's boot. Gunga Din (RKO), British Film Institute Stills Collection, © 1939, reproduced by kind permission of Turner Entertainment Co., All Rights Reserved.*

to his starving companions during their ill-fated expedition to Labrador, and named a range of mountains in his honour.<sup>7</sup> Boys with military ambitions, including the future generals Ridgway and Patton, found their home in his work; Patton later wrote his own, quite dreadful, poems in the style of Kipling.<sup>8</sup> With Kipling's poems regularly appearing in the American newspapers, the Irish-American satirist, Finley Peter Dunne pointed to an absurd Kipling cult and had his comic creation Mr. Dooley proclaim that 'Roodyard [sic] Kipling' wrote 'the finest pothry [sic] in the wurruld [sic]'.<sup>9</sup> But Kipling had caught the spirit of the age.

Kipling filled a niche in the American imagination of the 1890s as no indigenous writer could. His novels and poems seemed to offer a lively portrait of military and Imperial life at odds with the old American mistrust of standing armies, but in tune with the brazen rhetoric of men like Theodore Roosevelt. As the US embraced an empire of its own in the Pacific and Caribbean, Kipling was read as propaganda off-the-peg. Yet in their enthusiasm Americans neglected the element of warning in Kipling's work. The most obvious misreading was of Kipling's poem: *The White Man's Burden*. This bitter verse carried within it a clear statement of the futility of Empire in which 'the best ye breed' could expect only thankless suffering and the 'savage wars of peace'. Nevertheless the poem immediately became part of the American language, surfacing in numerous Imperial tracts.<sup>10</sup> The United States had to learn of 'savage wars of peace' the hard way – in the jungles of the Philippines and Central America.

### *Kipling's Empire in 1930s Hollywood*

The massive trauma of the Great War forced a radical reassessment of American foreign policy. In its aftermath, as anti-war novels and films abounded, the US government turned its back on alliances and Kiplingesque military forays to right the wrongs of Asia.<sup>11</sup> Hollywood, however, felt differently. Throughout the 1930s the Empire prospered in film. The genre had much to offer. First of all the films took place far away and long ago, and provided a welcome escape from the depression. Moreover, they offered welcome reassurance at a time of renewed challenges to the old certainties of race, class and gender. The hegemony of the white American male was challenged as never before by the collapse of American industry and agriculture. The post-war years had brought new competitors in the job market – including Afro-American migrants from the South – and new challenges closer to home as women rejected their old position of vote-less subordination. In such a world it was no wonder that a genre of films in which the common white man consistently triumphed should prosper. It is, however, surprising that Hollywood was unable to meet these

psychological needs with its traditional fare: the western.

Western films and novels had flourished in the boom-years of the 1920s. During the 1930s the genre went into relative decline. The big budgets drained away and westerns became the staple of 'B' movies and serials, surviving largely because such films were so cheap to make.<sup>12</sup> It is easy to see why. The agricultural depression sat uneasily along side narratives of triumph in the west. By translating the action to the British Empire, Hollywood was able to retain the same themes and to use the same locations in the California Sierras.<sup>13</sup> An Empire setting also enabled the studios to employ their roster of British stars and to tap the steady market for 'army pictures' without evoking unpleasant memories of the trenches. Finally, Hollywood needed to make a profit. With the additional cost of 'talkies', the studios found that they could only break even on the US release of a film. Profits required a lively export market. It soon became apparent that Europe had no objection to seeing its imperialism restaged by Americans.<sup>14</sup> Having found a formula that would sell internationally, Hollywood stuck to it.

The success of Henry Hathaway's *Lives of a Bengal Lancer* in 1934 unleashed a barrage of imitators.<sup>15</sup> Soon the setting of British India was familiar enough to be satirized by Laurel and Hardy in *Bonnie Scotland* (1935) and safe enough to be the basis for a Shirley Temple vehicle: *Wee Willie Winkie* (1937).<sup>16</sup> While only the latter was actually based on a Kipling story, Kipling's India was never far below the surface in these films. Kipling's death in 1936 leant further topicality and soon plans were afoot to remake *The Light That Failed*, *Captains Courageous* and, of Kipling's Indian works, *Kim* and two episodes from *The Jungle Book*.<sup>17</sup> At the time of his death Kipling himself had been working on treatments of his story 'Thy Servant a Dog' and *Soldiers Three*.<sup>18</sup> In this atmosphere it is hardly surprising that first MGM and then United Artists should consider an epic film based on Kipling's poem *Gunga Din*. RKO finished the job.<sup>19</sup>

### *The Movie*

*Gunga Din* makes an immediate claim to its origins in Kipling. The film begins with a narrator reading the second half of the opening stanza of the poem – perhaps the best known of his *Barrack-Room Ballads* of 1892. In the finale of the film Kipling himself is portrayed writing his poem in response to events that he has witnessed. It is then read as a eulogy at Gunga Din's grave-side. The opening of the film also claims historical veracity, with titles reading: 'the portions of this picture dealing with the worship of the goddess Kali are based on historic fact' and credits acknowledging three British army technical advisers. Such credits are misleading. The notion of a Thug revival in the 1880s is fantasy and Kipling's poem provides little more than the character of

Din. The body of the film is a free-wheeling adventure very loosely based on the characters of Kipling's cycle of military short stories featuring the 'Soldiers Three': Privates Mulvaney, Ortheris and Learoyd.<sup>20</sup>

Little of the original 'Soldiers Three' survived into the final screenplay. They are promoted Sergeants and their names changed to Cutter, Ballantine and MacChesney. In the original they are wry anti-heroic figures, ironic inversions of Dumas' *Three Musketeers*.<sup>21</sup> They represent both working class and regional foundations of the British Empire, and speak in thick Irish, Cockney and Yorkshire dialects.<sup>22</sup> In order to be comprehensible in an American screenplay, they speak an uneven Hollywood cockney. Their adventures are 'up-graded' and sanitised for the film. Rather than just weathering scrapes around the barracks, they now hold the fate of India in their hands as they battle to avert its re-conquest by the Thugs. Similarly the tragedy that pervades their lives is utterly absent. One does not see in RKO's India the 'madness, alcoholism, self-doubt, and suicide' that, as Zoreh Sullivan has written, 'haunt the characters' in Kipling's Indian short fiction. Victor McLaglen's MacChesney has none of the 'inextinguishable sorrow' that marked Kipling's own Private Mulvaney.<sup>23</sup>

The plot interweaves three stories. The first is the challenge to British India from a revival of the Thug murder cult. The second, is the desire of the loyal water-bearer Gunga Din to become a fully fledged member of the Regiment. The third is the struggle to preserve the team of three, in the face of Ballantine's decision to leave the army to get married. These three stories overlap playfully. It becomes clear that MacChesney and Cutter find Ballantine's marriage as distasteful as being prisoners of the Thugs. All three strands of the film deliver powerful affirmation of the white working man's race and class and gender. Accents and manners establish the heroes as working class, but it is in the areas of race and gender that the film really goes to work.

Like many films of this era, *Gunga Din* privileges male friendship above all other bonds.<sup>24</sup> The opening barracks fist-fight and first battle with the Thugs show the three sergeants working together. They co-operate instinctively like members of a first-rate cricket team. The three-man friendship lends itself well to exploring the love between men. There is safety in Kipling's triangle of the 'Soldiers Three' that is absent from his other stories dealing with close male friendship, such as *The Light That Failed* or *The Man Who Would be King*. Here at least the screenplay of *Gunga Din* reflects Kipling. The protagonists of *The Man Who Would Be King* acknowledge at the beginning of their adventure that the intrusion of a woman could threaten their plans to conquer a kingdom in the Himalayas and write a prohibition on marriage into their contract. The breaking of this clause in the contract shatters their partnership and costs them their kingdom. Ballantine's marriage in *Gunga Din* is no less threatening.<sup>25</sup> The scenes in which Ballantine



(Fairbanks) courts his fiancée Emmy (Joan Fontaine) are oddly ambiguous. Close-ups dominated by teeth establish their relationship as rather grotesque, animalistic and oddly unnatural. Ballantine's desire for marriage is cast as un-masculine. He is humiliated when his comrades meet him in a drapers shop, choosing curtains for his 'den' with his wife-to-be. When Ballantine marches away dragging a skein of cloth behind him, Cutter and MacChesney joke that his 'petticoat is showing'. Once Cutter has fallen into the hands of the Thugs, Ballantine acts. He tells Emmy:

The trouble is you don't want a man for a husband. You want a coward who'll run out on his friend when he's in danger. Well that's not me, and never has been, and never will be. I don't care how much I love you – and I do, very much – I'm a soldier ... I mean I'm a man first.

With manhood defined, Emmy effectively disappears from the film. Ballantine resolves to remain in the army and the joyful reunion at the end of the film is wholly male.

The racial message of the film is equally clear. It takes a hoard of Thugs to overpower a single white man. The Indians die without dignity. Their efforts to run from sticks of dynamite are presented comically as though in a cartoon. Although the Thug Guru (played by Edward Ciannelli) is allowed to explain his cause and gives his life for it, he is first represented as a madman, and photographed so as to accentuate glinting teeth, fanatical eyes and an exaggerated black face. In contrast Gunga Din initially appears only as comic relief, like MacChesney's pet elephant, Annie. Yet while the elephant is nurtured as a 'little elephant girl', Gunga Din is merely patronized. When Cutter (Cary Grant) discovers him secretly drilling, he attempts to help him to master the basic moves. The scene is played for laughs, the man, dressed only in a *dhoti*, is urged to place his thumbs down the seams of his trousers. Yet Gunga Din makes choices throughout the film. He declares to the Guru that he is supporting the British of his own free will, and is not a slave but a soldier. Ultimately, he sacrifices his life to raise the alarm. He is the catalyst who advances the action of the film.<sup>26</sup> Hoping to become a soldier, he tells Cutter of the existence of a golden temple in the hills ripe for plunder, he frees Cutter from prison, summons Ballantine and MacChesney to his aid and then raises the alarm to avert the massacre of an unsuspecting British regiment. Yet he is implicitly less of a man than the British. He is diminished by the camera angles, by his limited ambition (he tells Cutter that he has no wish to be a Maharajah: 'Bugler would be very satisfactory'), and by the visual humour of the film which depicts him as symbolically impotent. In the first battle he mimics the sergeants by waving a broken sword. Later he offers Cutter a fork to dig his way out of prison. Arguably, the film seeks to move the audience into the same position as



the narrator of Kipling's poem, and to question the certainties of white supremacy with the line: 'You're a better man than I am Gunga Din', but given the racial thrust of the film, the compliment is rendered meaningless.

*Gunga Din* does have an ethical framework, and, indeed, the script flirts with a critique of imperialism. Cutter, like Dravot in *The Man Who Would Be King* is undone by greed. His eagerness for plunder leads him straight into the arms of the Thugs. For Cutter, India is just the venue for his jolly army life, to be exploited as necessary. He considers blowing up the Taj Mahal and starting a war just to keep his friend Ballantine in the army. The screenplay does not endorse such behaviour. Cutter survives the film only by a whisker.<sup>27</sup> But potentially anti-Imperial messages are diluted by the portrayal of the Indians. They are sneaky. They torture their captives. They are fanatical devotees of a blood-thirsty religion. They feign obsequiousness, and only attack in strength. The British, in contrast, are open. They march along singing loudly and are prepared to face terrible odds.<sup>28</sup> The British are also oddly discriminating in battle. The three sergeants use their fists on unarmed Thugs, but shoot at Thug snipers. Fair play wins the day.

In writing such scenes the American authors give a fair idea of the elements in Kipling's work that they find appealing. These omissions are not less telling. The ambiguities of Kipling's Empire are missing altogether. In such poems as *Piet* or 'Fuzzy-Wuzzy' Kipling gives his soldiers a grudging respect for their enemies.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, in the poem *Gunga Din* was admired by the British narrator not for rescuing the regiment at the cost of his own life, but for simply risking his life by attending to the wounded under fire.<sup>30</sup> Finally, there is a dark underside to Kipling's poem, which emerges in its final stanza:

So I'm meet 'im later on,  
At the place where 'e is gone –  
Where it's always double drill and no canteen.  
'E'll be squattin' on the coals,  
Givin' drink to poor damned souls,  
An' I'll get a swig in hell from Gunga Din!<sup>31</sup>

Although these words are read in the film, their bleak implications are negated by the images that accompany them. As Gunga Din is piped-to-rest posthumously appointed to the rank of Corporal, he appears in an ellipse in the centre of the screen as a contented heavenly figure dressed in full uniform, and salutes. Unlike the damned Din of Kipling, the Hollywood incarnation is clearly redeemed.<sup>32</sup>

In sum the film that appeared in 1939 was a virtual negation of Kipling's work. Where Kipling found complexity, tragedy, hybridity, and futility, *Gunga Din* presents simplicity, facile masculine posturing and easy answers in violence. The film's cultural distortions make

Kipling's own highly problematic writing seem like the most carefully balanced ethnography. As *Gunga Din*'s box office success made clear, no one in the United States minded. In Britain, Kipling's widow, Caroline, had her reservations. She claimed that the representation of her husband in the final reel exposed his memory to ridicule. RKO obligingly cut the offending scenes from later released prints.<sup>33</sup> The film was, however, banned in Japan, Malaya and British India.<sup>34</sup>

### *The Later Career of Gunga Din.*

The release of *Gunga Din* in January 1939 coincided with the deepening crisis in Europe. While the film doubtless provided welcome escapism at the time, it had apparently been shaped to promote pro-British feeling in the US in the face of the totalitarian threat. Yet by 1941 the film had outlived its political usefulness.<sup>35</sup> The United States joined the war with the expectation that the peace would include decolonization. The US government's Office of War Information took care not to offend their new ally India. As Clayton Koppes and Gregory Black have noted, the OWI prevailed on RKO not to re-release *Gunga Din* and persuaded MGM to abandon their plans to film Kipling's *Kim*.<sup>36</sup>

The Empire film also suffered by default from the revival of the Western.<sup>37</sup> The genre offered the ideal vehicle to celebrate America's new-found self-confidence. Now westerns could be packaged as westerns again, and Empire movies became westerns also. As Jeffrey Richards has noted, *Lives of a Bengal Lancer* (1937) became *Geronimo* (1939), *Four Men and a Prayer* (1938) became *Fury at Furnace Creek* (1948). *Gunga Din* resurfaced as a western *Sergeants Three* in 1961, remade by John Sturges (who edited the original) with Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Peter Lawford and Sammy Davis Jr. as their faithful bugler.<sup>38</sup>

Kipling and the Empire bubbled away under the surface for a while. In 1950 MGM finally filmed *Kim* and a flurry of lacklustre Empire pictures followed.<sup>39</sup> The shadow of Kipling was barely discernible in America's own Empire. In the later stages of World War Two, American officers in Teheran nicknamed their mess servant Gunga Din.<sup>40</sup> Teddy Roosevelt's grandson, Kermit Roosevelt, the head of CIA operations in the Middle East retained the Kiplingesque family nickname Kim.<sup>41</sup> But literary tastes were elsewhere. With an Ian Fleming novel on his bedside table and a confidence unmeasured by the experience of European Empire, John F. Kennedy committed his troops to war in Vietnam.<sup>42</sup>

The experience of Vietnam left its mark on both westerns and Empire films. In both genres the protagonists became alienated victims who found vindication in buddy relationships and death in Mexico (*The Wild Bunch*) or Bolivia (*Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*)<sup>43</sup> or high

in the Himalayas in John Huston's film of Kipling's *The Man Who Would Be King*. Huston's film, like Kipling's text displayed Empire as a profane scramble that brings death and madness to its two would-be rulers Dravot and Carnehan (played by Sean Connery and Michael Caine). Yet, the old spirit of *Gunga Din* is never far away. In Huston's version the 'native' ally of the two adventurers, nicknamed Billy Fish, becomes a Gurkha (played by Saeed Jaffrey), the sole survivor of a lost expedition who is still loyal to the British Crown. In character and costume he takes up exactly where the ghost of Gunga Din left off. But above all the myth of male friendship is reinscribed and the Imperial project is shown to be, for the most part, tremendous fun, and the audience is left with the suggestion that but for the intrusion of a woman, Carnehan and Dravot could have kept their kingdom.<sup>44</sup>

British India remains a perennial presence in movies whether British-made end-of-Empire epics, or such lively pieces of American escapism as Disney's 1994 offering: *Rudyard Kipling's The Jungle Book*. Old themes endure. In Hollywood's India, even Thugs may still be found as in Spielberg's monumentally tasteless *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*.<sup>45</sup> Debate about Empire is elsewhere. The United States may have ignored the inner-warnings of Kipling, but the same messages were learned in Vietnam. As Kipling feared that the glory of the British Empire might someday fade to become 'one with Nineveh and Tyre',<sup>46</sup> so the United States now grapples with the prospect of Imperial decline. Filmic treatments of the Vietnam war regularly show respect for an enemy who could fight on 'a handful of rice and a little dried rat meat' and portray the Veteran as every inch as exploited as Kipling's 'Tommy Atkins'.

For its Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an', Chuck him  
Out, the brute!

But it's 'Saviour of his country' when the guns begin  
to shoot;<sup>47</sup>

In *Apocalypse Now* Francis Ford Coppola highlights the degree to which Vietnam was an Imperial war, by borrowing elements from Conrad's great critique of empire, *Heart of Darkness*.<sup>48</sup> The Vietnam War seemed to vindicate Kipling's epigram: 'A fool lies here who tried to hustle the East'.<sup>49</sup> There is a coda. In the aftermath of the publication of Robert McNamara's memoirs, with its shocking admission that this architect of the war in Vietnam believed the cause to be lost but remained silent, at least one commentator turned to the disillusioned Kipling, broken by the loss of his only son in Great War, for his conclusion:

If any question why we died,  
Tell them, because our fathers lied.<sup>50</sup>

## NOTES

The author is grateful to Prof. Jeffrey Richards of the University of Lancaster for his helpful comments on an earlier version of this work, and to the Department of History at the University of Maryland, College Park, for their hospitality during its completion.

1. Jeffrey Richards, 'Boy's own Empire: Feature films and Imperialism in the 1930s', in *Imperialism and Popular Culture*, ed., John M. Mackenzie (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986), p. 144.
2. McLaglen, Grant and the other actors in British army roles were all British-born, with the exception of Douglas Fairbanks Jr.
3. Sayre graduated from Exeter College, Oxford in August 1922 with a BA in English. Contrary to Philip French, 'Kipling and the Movies' in *Rudyard Kipling: The Man his Work and his World*, ed., John Gross (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1972), p. 166, he was not a Rhodes Scholar. He co-wrote the screen play for George Stevens, dir., *Annie Oakley* (RKO, 1935). He served as *New Yorker* war correspondent in Persia.
4. The development of the screenplay for *Gunga Din* is documented in Rudy Behlmer, *Behind the Scenes*, (Hollywood: Samuel French, 1990), pp. 88-90. Hecht and MacArthur (authors of *The Front Page*) were hired by Howard Hawks. Faulkner's contribution was the device of ending with a final heroic sacrifice by Gunga Din and a scene in which the British gather at his grave and intone 'You're a better man than I am Gunga Din'.
5. In 1892 Kipling married an American and lived in the US for the next four years: for a summary see Norman Page, *A Kipling Companion*, (London: Macmillan, 1984), pp. 17-20. Such works as his poem *An American: 1894* and his account of his American travels *From Sea to Sea*, touched on American themes. His verse *The White Man's Burden* of 1899 was subtitled *The United States and the Philippine Islands*. Rudyard Kipling, *Rudyard Kipling's Verse: The Definitive Edition* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1977), pp. 184-185, 323-34.
6. I am grateful to Kermit Roosevelt III and Corinne Roosevelt for confirming this connection.
7. See Dillon Wallace, *The Lure of the Labrador Wild*, (New York: F. Revell Co., 1905), as cited in Alan Williams, 'Explorers Wild: The Hubbard's in Labrador', in this collection.
8. *The Poems of General George S. Patton Jr.: Lines of Fire*, ed., Carmine A. Prioli (Lewiston, NY.: Edwin Mellen Press, 1991), p. vi. Matthew B. Ridgway, *Soldier: The Memoirs of Matthew B. Ridgway* (New York: Harper, 1956), pp. 16, 21, 78, 305, 309.
9. Finley Peter Dunne, *Mr Dooley in the Hearts of his Countrymen* (Boston: Small, Maynard and Co, 1899), pp. 13-17.
10. For a selection of usage and parodies of the poem see Nell Irvin Painter, *Standing at Armageddon: The United States, 1877-1919* (New York: Norton, 1987), pp. 141-69.
11. As was clear from the Hoover administration's response to the Manchuria Crisis.
12. Edward Buscombe ed., *The BFI Companion to the Western* (London: Deutsch/BFI, 1988); on the 1920s: pp. 33-35, on the 1930s: pp. 41-43. For production figures see pp. 427-28. In 1933 Westerns constituted only 13% of all films made in the US as against 28% in 1926. This was the lowest ebb for the genre until the 1960s. 'A' represented only 1 film in every 80 produced between

- 1930 and 1939. In 1934, the year in which both *Lives of a Bengal Lancer* and *Clive of India* were made, no studio released a single 'A' Western.
13. In order to persuade Gary Cooper to appear in *Lives of a Bengal Lancer* the director urged him 'to think of it as a western set in India'. Richards, 'Boys Own Empire', p. 145.
  14. For a break down of revenues at MGM see H. Mark Glancy, 'MGM Film Grosses, 1924-1948: The Eddie Mannix Ledger', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 12, 2 (1992), pp. 127-144. On Warner Brothers' bid to maintain export revenue in wartime see Nicholas J. Cull, *Selling War: British Propaganda and American 'Neutrality' in World War Two* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 51-52.
  15. Henry Hathaway, dir., *Lives of a Bengal Lancer* (Paramount, 1934); Richard Boleslawski, dir., *Clive of India* (Twentieth Century, 1934); Michael Curtiz, dir., *The Charge of the Light Brigade* (Warner, 1936); John Ford, dir., *Four Men and a Prayer* (Twentieth Century Fox, 1938) and Sidney Salkow, dir., *Storm Over Bengal* (Republic, 1938). For an earlier example of the genre see John Ford, dir., *The Black Watch* (Fox, 1929). The British were able to send a number of successful Empire pictures over to the United States, the most famous being Zoltan Korda, dir., *The Four Feathers* (Alexander Korda, 1939).
  16. James Horne, dir., *Bonnie Scotland* (MGM/Hal Roach, 1935) is set in a Scottish regiment in India; John Ford, dir., *Wee Willie Winkie* (Twentieth Century Fox, 1937).
  17. The original story provided little more than the name of the title character (originally a boy) and the general scenario for the film: *Wee Willie Winkie and other Stories* (Allahabad: A.H. Wheeler & Co, 1888). The other Kipling projects were all accomplished between 1937 and 1941: Victor Fleming, dir., *Captain's Courageous* (MGM, 1937); Robert Flaherty and Zoltan Korda, dirs., *Elephant Boy* (Korda, 1937); William Wellman, *The Light That Failed* (Paramount, 1939); Zoltan Korda and André de Toth, dirs., *The Jungle Book* (Korda, 1941). MGM first announced its plan to film *Kim* in 1938, the film did not appear until 1950. *The Light That Failed* had been filmed three times in the silent era, as had a version of Kipling's poem 'The Vampire' which appeared as *A Fool There Was*. For a survey of Kipling in film see French, 'Kipling and the Movies', pp. 162-69.
  18. French, 'Kipling and the Movies', p. 162; Jeffrey Richards, *The Age of the Dream Palace: Cinema and Society in Britain, 1930-1939* (London: Routledge, 1984), p. 49. The failure of Gaumont British to complete *Soldiers Three* is documented in Jeffrey Richards, "'Soldiers Three": The "Lost" Gaumont British Imperial Epic', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 15, 1 (1995), pp. 137-141. Kipling was also quoted in movies. It is a love of Kipling that persuades a young soldier to join-up in John Ford, dir., *The Lost Patrol* (RKO, 1934), cited in Jeffrey Richards, *Visions of Yesterday* (London: Routledge, 1973), pp. 148, 174.
  19. For the 1928 MGM plan and the development of the RKO project see Behlmer, *Behind the Scenes*, pp. 88-101. On the un-produced UA film and a 1935 screenplay by R.J. Minney see Richards, *The Age of the Dream Palace*, p. 140.
  20. The three first appeared in short stories written for the *Civil and Military Gazette* from 1887. Their stories were included in *Plain Tales From the Hills* (Allahabad: A.H. Wheeler & Co, 1888), and a second volume of their own: *Soldiers Three* (Allahabad: A.H. Wheeler & Co, 1888). Related stories appeared in *Life's Handicap* (London: Macmillan, 1891), *Many Inventions* (London: Macmillan, 1893), and *Actions and Reactions* (London: Macmillan, 1909). For



- bibliography see Kipling, *Soldiers Three and In Black and White* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Twentieth Century Classics edn., 1993), p. 208.
21. The three are introduced in *Plain Tales from the Hills* in a story called 'The Three Musketeers'. RKO's sergeants are placed in the Royal Engineers and are responsible for such things as repairing telegraph wires. Kipling's soldiers are mere 'privates in a regiment of the line'.
  22. Mark Paffard has suggested that this echoes Shakespeare's four regional soldiers in *Henry V*. See Paffard, *Kipling's Indian Fiction* (London: Macmillan, 1989), p. 61.
  23. Zoreh T. Sullivan, *Narratives of Empire: The Fictions of Rudyard Kipling* (Cambridge: CUP, 1993), p. 15. Mulvaney's sorrow is explored in 'The Courting of Dinah Shadd' collected in *Life's Handicap* which also includes 'On the Greenhow Hill' in which Learoyd loses the love of his life to consumption. Ortheris is driven to the brink of insanity by an awareness of the futility of his position in 'The Madness of Private Ortheris' in *Plain Tales from the Hills*.
  24. The myth underpins the brotherly love ethic at the core of *Beau Geste* (1939), which opens with the invented Arabic proverb: 'The love between a man and woman waxes and wanes like the moon, but the love of brother for brother is constant like the stars and endures like the word of the Prophet'.
  25. The marriage in 'The Man Who Would Be King' first published in *The Phantom Rickshaw* (Allahabad: A.H. Wheeler & Co., 1888), is doubly taboo as it is to a 'native' woman, but the 'contract' prohibits all women 'white or black'.
  26. His role is in keeping with that which Toni Morrison has identified as typically given to a parallel 'other' in US fiction, the Afro-American: see Toni Morrison, 'Unspeakable Things Unspoken', *Michigan Quarterly Review*, 28, 1 (Winter 1989), pp. 1-34.
  27. Cutter's motives and assumptions about India are humorously exposed as he over-interprets Thug behaviour. During the climax to the film, he is pinned down by Thug snipers a few feet from the treasure for which he lusts. After several hours in this tantalizing position he complains: 'is there no limit to the torture that the oriental mind can devise'.
  28. At one stage, to allow Gunga Din to escape, Cutter marches into the midst of a Thug ritual singing 'The Roast Beef of Old England' and tells the entire gathering that they are all under arrest.
  29. *Kipling's Verse*, pp. 400-401, 479-81. These sentiments may also be identified in the battle scene of *The Light that Failed* as cited in Paffard, *Kipling's Indian Fiction*, pp. 56-57.
  30. *Kipling's Verse*, pp. 406-409. There is no line in the film equivalent to: 'An' for all 'is dirty 'ide,/he was white, clear white, inside,/when he went to tend the wounded under fire!'
  31. *Kipling's Verse*, pp. 406-409.
  32. Although Kipling's narrator assumes that Din will be damned, the term 'Lazarushian' introduces a subtext of redemption. Of the two biblical Lazaruses, one is raised from the dead in John 11, 1-44 and the other, the principal character in the parable of Dives and Lazarus (Luke 16, 19-31) is saved while the rich man, who ignored his poverty in life, is damned. The parallels to the story of Gunga Din are clear, for the rich man calls for Lazarus to bring him water but is told that it is impossible for a saved soul to cross into hell to ease his suffering. Here, as in the short story 'Naboth' (*Life's Handicap*), Kipling's narrator's unwitting use of a biblical allusion turns in the mind of the reader to offer a critique of the Imperial project. On 'Naboth' see Sullivan, *Narratives of*

*Empire*, p. 12.

33. Behlmer, *Behind the Scenes*, pp. 100-101. It was in this form that the film began its illustrious career in re-release, making back its \$2,000,000 cost by 1941.
34. Richards, *The Age of the Dream Palace*, p. 137.
35. Beyond its pro-British content, the *Guru* is clearly Hitlerian. Of the key participants in the film Douglas Fairbanks Jr., Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur all played prominent roles in the movement to bring the US into World War Two.
36. Clayton R. Koppes and Gregory D. Black, *Hollywood Goes to War: How Politics, Profits and Propaganda Shaped World War Two Movies* (New York: Free Press, 1987), pp. 224-25, also Richards, *Visions of Yesterday*, p. 5.
37. The genre revived in the wake of John Ford, dir., *Stagecoach* (Walter Wanger, 1939) and George Marshall, dir., *Destry Rides Again* (Universal, 1939).
38. Richards, 'The Boys Own Empire', p. 157; John Sturges, dir., *Sergeants Three* (UA/Essex-Claude, 1961).
39. Victor Saville, dir., *Kim* (MGM, 1950); Tay Garnett, dir., *Soldiers Three* (MGM, 1951) similar films included Allan Davis, dir., *Rogues March* (MGM, 1953); Henry King, dir., *King of the Khyber Rifles* (Twentieth Century Fox, 1954). Wolfgang Reitherman, dir., *Jungle Book* (Disney, 1964) stands apart from these films, saying more about US race-relations in its vocal casting.
40. The servant embraced the name. He wrote an allegorical story to entertain the British and American officers for whom he worked, which was published as Ali Mirdrekvandi Gunga Din, *No Heaven For Gunga Din* (London: Gollancz, 1965).
41. On 'Kim' Roosevelt and the overthrow of Mussadiq see James A. Bill, *The Eagle and the Lion: The Tragedy of American-Iranian Relations* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), pp. 86-97.
42. On James Bond and Kennedy see David Burner, *John F. Kennedy and a New Generation* (Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1988), p. 63.
43. Sam Peckinpah, dir., *The Wild Bunch* (Warner, 1969); George Roy Hill, dir., *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* (Twentieth Century Fox, 1969).
44. John Huston, dir., *The Man Who Would Be King* (Columbia et al., 1975). For the original story see Rudyard Kipling, *Wee Willie Winkie* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1988).
45. Stephen Spielberg, dir., *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (Paramount/Lucasfilm, 1984). Stephen Sommer, dir., *Rudyard Kipling's The Jungle Book* (Disney, 1994).
46. 'Recessional: 1897', *Kipling's Verse*, pp. 328-329.
47. *Kipling's Verse*, pp. 398-399. The 'rat meat' quotation is from Michael Herr's narration written for Francis Ford Coppola, prod./dir., *Apocalypse Now* (Omni Zoetrope, 1979). Abuse of Veterans has become a sub-genre of the Vietnam War film from the fictional Rambo of *First Blood* to the real-life of Ron Kovic in *Born on the Fourth of July*.
48. Coppola's protagonist meets an insane war photographer who spouts Kipling's 'If'. A scene in which the protagonist is confronted by French colonists who had 'stayed on in Vietnam' was cut from the final version of the film, see Fax Bahr and George Hickenlooper, dirs., *Hearts of Darkness: A Film Maker's Apocalypse* (Zoetrope et al., 1991).
49. Originally from the heading to chapter 5 of *The Naulahka*, reprinted in *Kipling's Verse*, p. 537.
50. 'Common Form', *Kipling's Verse*, p. 390 cited on CBS Evening News, 18 April 1995.